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MEMORANDUM TO THE SECRETARY

FROM: Matt Nimetz

SUBJECT: Follow-up to Jonestown Incident

Issue for Decision

The Department has been making good progress in implementing the recommendations of the Crimmins/Carpenter report as well as the report of the staff investigation of the House Foreign Affairs Committee into the events at Jonestown, Guyana in November of last year. We need your guidance on how best to proceed with the major recommendation of both reports, namely, the creation of a high-level review committee to study the impact of the Freedom of Information and Privacy Acts on Foreign Service reporting.

Essential Factors

We have been working to ensure that suitable steps are taken to implement the changes called for in the investigations into the Department's handling of relations with the People's Temple. I have already briefed you regarding the improvements that have been made in providing adequate security and communications support to traveling Members of Congress. CA has now reorganized its Office of Overseas Citizens Services on a geographic basis in order to promote a closer working relationship between consular officers in the Department and the regional bureaus. The People's Temple experience has been used as the basis for new training exercises designed to sensitize consular officers to the possibility of encountering difficult situations abroad involving semi-autonomous communities of American citizens.

We have yet to grapple with the complex issue of the impact of the Privacy and Freedom of Information Acts, much less the U.S. Constitution, on Foreign Service reporting. The Crimmins/Carpenter report recommended that the Department

establish a high-level review committee, chaired by the Counselor, to examine the broad implications of these two acts and to recommend legislative changes, if thought necessary. I am inclined to defer a high-level review in favor of a smaller working group.

Recommendation

That you authorize me to establish a working group within the Department to study the effect of the Privacy and Freedom of Information Acts on Foreign Service reporting and to recommend any necessary changes in Department policy guidance or in the laws themselves.

Approve. ✓ 26 JUN 1979 Disapprove _____